



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## HIDALGO AND MORELOS

ALTHOUGH the political functions of the Spanish Inquisition have been greatly exaggerated by a certain school of writers there can be no question that, except when the prerogatives of the Holy See were involved, it was always ready to assist its masters and to demonstrate that the cause of the state was the cause of religion. This was especially the case in the later stage of its career after the outbreak of the French Revolution had threatened the monarchical principle, and it is prominently manifested in the trials, by the Inquisition of Mexico, of the two foremost martyrs of the war of independence—Hidalgo and Morelos.<sup>1</sup>

Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, the parish priest of Los Dolores, who first raised the standard of revolt in conjunction with Allende, Aldama and Abasolo, and who was elected generalissimo of the insurgent army, was a singularly interesting character. Born in 1753, he received his education at the university of San Nicolás in Valladolid (Michoacan), where he became rector and theological professor. In the formal accusation presented during his trial it is asserted that he took only the degree of bachelor and refused to present himself for that of doctor because he said the faculty were a pack of ignoramuses; that he was known while there as *el zorro*, or the fox, because of his cunning, and that he was finally expelled in consequence of a scandalous adventure in the course of which he was obliged to escape at night through a window of the chapel—but such statements may be received with allowance. Taking orders, he finally settled at Los Dolores as *cura*, where, in spite of a large revenue, he encumbered himself with debts. He was fond of music and dancing and gaming, and his relations with women were of a character common enough with the clergy of the period. His abounding energy led him to establish potteries and to introduce silk-culture, which may doubtless account for his indebted-

<sup>1</sup> The following details, for the most part I believe hitherto inedited, are derived, in so far as concerns the trial of Hidalgo, from a transcript of the original records, made in 1865 by Señor José Maria Lafragua and kindly communicated to me by David Fergusson, Esq.

As regards the trial of Morelos my authority is a report of the Inquisitor Flores, accompanied with the documents, made to the Supreme Council of the Inquisition, November 27 and December 29, 1815. It is preserved in the Archives of Simancas, Inquisicion, Sala 39, Legajo 1473.

ness. He was regarded as a prodigy of learning and kept up his intellectual interests, translating tragedies of Racine and comedies of Molière, the latter of which he caused to be acted in his house, his favorite being *Tartufe*. The priest Garcia de Carrasqueda, who enjoyed his intimacy for twelve or thirteen years, when on trial before the Inquisition, deposed that they used to read together Cicero, Serry, Fleury's *Ecclesiastical History*, Rollin's *Ancient History* and an Italian work on commerce by Genovesi, and that he praised highly the orations of Æschines and Demosthenes, Bossuet, Buffon's *Natural History*, Pitaval's *Causes Célèbres* and various historical books. He was fond of discussing questionable points in theology and emitting opinions not wholly orthodox on such subjects as the stigmata of St. Francis, the House of Loreto, the Veronica, whether St. Didymus or Gestas was the penitent thief, the transmission of original sin, the identity of the Three Kings and the like, and his high reputation for learning caused him to be accepted as an authority. Altogether he presents himself to us as a man of unusual physical and intellectual energy, not overnice as to the employment of those energies, of wide culture, of vigorous and inquiring mind and of small reverence for formulas or for authority.

Such a character was not likely to escape the notice of the Holy Office, and as early as July 16, 1800, Fray Joaquin Huesca, of the order of Merced and a teacher of philosophy, denounced him to the commissioner of Valladolid for various unorthodox utterances at which Fray Manuel Estrada of the same order had been present, and the latter on being examined confirmed and exaggerated the accusation. In transmitting this to the tribunal, July 19, the commissioner reported that Hidalgo was a most learned man who had ruined himself with gambling and women, that he read prohibited books which perverted his spirit, and that while professor of theology he had taught from Jansenist works. The Inquisition necessarily undertook an investigation which lasted for more than a year and included the testimony of thirteen witnesses, with the result of showing that Hidalgo had denied the doctrine of rewards and punishments in this life and the authenticity of the texts on which it was based; he had spoken disparagingly of the popes, one of whom was probably in hell, and of the government of the church by ignoramuses; he had asserted that no Jew of sound judgment could be converted because there was no proof that the Messiah had come; he had denied the perpetual virginity of the Virgin, and had asserted that transubstantiation and auricular confession were unknown to the primitive church, and he had assented to the popular error that there was no sin in fornication. He was described as revolutionary

in his tendencies, speaking of monarchs as tyrants, and cherishing aspirations for liberty; he was well read in current French literature and had little respect for the censorship—in short, he was an *afrancesado*. The commissioner of San Miguel el Grande reported, March 11, 1801, much about Hidalgo's disorderly life, and that he carried the Alcoran about with him, but in a second report, of April 13, he stated that during the recent Easter Hidalgo had reformed, a matter which was widely discussed and seems to have attracted general attention. In due time, on September 18, 1801, all the testimony was laid before the fiscal, or prosecuting officer of the Inquisition, who reported, October 2, that if Hidalgo had uttered the propositions attributed to him he should be arrested with sequestration of property, but that the witnesses were contradictory, while Estrada had the reputation of an habitual liar. He therefore recommended that the case be suspended and the papers be filed away for future reference, to which the tribunal assented.

Nothing more was heard about Hidalgo until July 22, 1807, when a priest named José María Castilblanc came forward to say that in 1801 Estrada had told him scandalous and heretical things concerning him. More serious was a denunciation made, May 4, 1808, by María Manuela Herrera, aged forty-one and described as a woman of good reputation who frequented the sacraments. By command of her confessor she deposed that she had once lived with Hidalgo as his concubine, when he told her that Christ had not died on the cross but that it was another man; also that there was no hell—this latter, she supposed, being to quiet her conscience, for they had an agreement that she was to provide him with women and he was to provide her with men. This was again laid before the fiscal who reported, June 8, in favor of awaiting further proof. Then, March 15, 1809, Fray Diego Manuel Bringas deposed that he had found Hidalgo in possession of prohibited books, such as Serry's *History of the Congregations De Auxiliis*, both under his own name and that of Augustin Leblanc; also his *Dissertations on Christ and the Virgin*, in which he speaks without measure of María de Agreda and that Hidalgo praised this work and called María a deluded old woman.<sup>1</sup> Still, with singular moderation, no

<sup>1</sup> The learned Dominican Jacques-Augustin Serry's *Historia Congregationum de Auxiliis*, issued also under the name of Augustin Leblanc, is in the Spanish Index (*Indice Ultimo*, p. 249) but not in the Roman. His *Exercitationes de Christo ejusque V. Matre* are in both.

María de Agreda was a Spanish mystic of the seventeenth century in behalf of whose canonization Spain has made persistent and hitherto unsuccessful appeals to the Holy See. Her *Ciudad Mística de Dios* has been more than once condemned in Rome but has escaped a permanent place on the Index through consideration for Spanish susceptibility.

action was taken to check Hidalgo's audacity and had he been content to leave politics alone it is safe to say that the Inquisition would not have troubled him, though it was vexing hundreds of others with far less excuse.

When, however, he started the revolution, September 16, 1810, this lethargy gave place to the utmost activity. The official Gazette of September 28 asserted that he was disseminating among the people the doctrine that there is neither hell, purgatory, nor glory; an extract from this was forthwith sent by the Inquisition to its commissioner at Querétaro with instructions to obtain verification, which he had no trouble in doing, although the evidence was purely hearsay. Without waiting for this, however, the testimony which had so long slumbered in the archives of the *secreto* was laid before the *calificadores* or examiners, October 9, with instructions to report at once. This they did the next day to the effect that as Hidalgo was a sectary of French liberty they pronounced him a libertine, seditious, schismatic, a formal heretic, a Judaizer, a Lutheran, a Calvinist and strongly suspect of atheism and materialism. It was not difficult to reach such conclusions in view of successive edicts of the Inquisition which had been issued in 1808 and 1809 directed against all proclamations and emissaries seeking to pervert the loyalty of the colonists in favor of the ambitious schemes of Napoleon, for in these the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people was defined to be a manifest heresy.

Immediately on receiving the report of the examiners the tribunal resolved that, as Hidalgo was surrounded by his army of insurgents and could not be arrested, he should be summoned by edict to appear within thirty days, in default of which proceedings would be had against him *in absentia*. On the 13th this edict was ready and on the 14th it was posted in the churches and was distributed throughout the land with all possible speed. It is a singular medley of politics and religion, illustrating the duplicate character of the Inquisition of the period and the enormous advantage to the government of possessing control over the ecclesiastical establishment, whereby an attack on the civil power could be made to assume the appearance of an assault on the faith. All the heretical utterances, discredited nine years before by the action of the tribunal, are put forward as absolute facts. It is impiety that has led him to raise the banner of revolt, and to seduce numbers of unhappy dupes to follow him. In the inability to reach him personally he is summoned, under pain of excommunication, to appear for trial within thirty days, as otherwise he will be prosecuted *in rebel-dia*, to definitive sentence and burning in effigy if necessary. All

those who support him or have converse with him, and all those who do not inform against his revolutionary projects, are declared guilty of the crime of fautorship of heresy and subject to the penalties decreed for it by the canons. When to this are added the proclamations of excommunication issued against the insurgents by the Archbishop of Mexico and the bishops of the disturbed districts, it will be seen how powerful was the restraining influence exercised by the Church over a population trained to obedience and how fierce were the passions which braved its anathemas.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, the hatred of the creoles and of the Indians for the *Gachupines*, or Spaniards, was so bitter that four-fifths of the native clergy took the side of the insurgents in spite of the censures of the Church and questions of faith became inextricably involved in the conflict between the factions. To the loyalists Hidalgo became a heretic, and indeed a heresiarch, and the confessional was so largely used to sustain their cause that in self-defence the insurgents incurred the charge of a new heresy by asserting that confession to a Gachupin priest was invalid. They derived great comfort, moreover, through their belief in the protection of Our Lady of Guadalupe, who was universally revered, and especially by the Indians, as the sovereign patroness of Mexico. On the fateful 16th of September, when Hidalgo was marching on San Miguel el Grande at the head of his little band of insurgents, in passing through Atotonilco he chanced to take an image on linen of the Guadalupe Virgin and give it to one of his men to carry as a banner. It was adopted by the other bands as they rose and it became the standard of the insurrection, usually accompanied with an image of Ferdinand VII. and of the eagle of Mexico and the inscription "Viva Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe! Viva Fernando VII.! Viva la América y muere el mal gobierno!" To stimulate her intervention, Hidalgo issued a proclamation, just before the disastrous day of the Bridge of Calderon, in which he ordered a novena of masses dedicated to our lady of Guadalupe, "as the sworn Maecenas of all the American nation." Second in rank as a tutelary power of the insurrection was Our Lady of Puebla, and against these the loyalists pitted a new-comer, Our Lady of Los Remedios, who was denounced as a Gachupina by the natives. It was as though there

<sup>1</sup> These comprehensive excommunications led to a result not wholly creditable to the Church. A writer in 1822 calls attention to the fact that while the leading insurgents who were captured were formally reconciled to the Church before they were shot, the mass of the people never paid attention to the censures and were finally received to the sacraments without having been absolved. *El Sol*, Mexico, February 27, 1822, p. 107.

were three Homeric divinities presiding over and participating in the struggle.<sup>1</sup>

The Inquisition labored earnestly to get evidence of sacrilegious acts committed by the insurgents and, as they were beaten back, it had its emissaries in the territories abandoned by them collecting testimony as to individuals who had sympathized with the revolt or had opposed the posting of the edict. The most active of these was Fray Simon de la Mora, who accompanied the royal army in its advance. He reported that it was useless to attempt to enumerate the common people, but he sent the names of fifty-nine persons of standing, many of them ecclesiastics, with the evidence against them, and the notes on the margin of the record show that their names were forthwith entered for prosecution.

The edict was duly posted in the towns occupied by the army, but in the course of a night or two it was generally torn down or rendered illegible with paint, in spite of the heavy penalties for thus impeding the Inquisition. Hidalgo felt it necessary to issue a manifesto in his defence, protesting that he had never departed from the faith, and pointing out the contradictory character of the miscellaneous heresies imputed to him. To this the Inquisition replied with another edict, January 26, 1811, reiterating its charges against him, stigmatizing him as a cruel atheist, and prohibiting sundry proclamations issued by the insurgents.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile the trial of Hidalgo *in absentia* was proceeding through its several stages as elaborately and deliberately as though he were a common heretic in time of peace. On November 24, 1810, the tribunal declared that, as it had evidence that Hidalgo on Octo-

<sup>1</sup> The following madrigal, composed by an ecclesiastic of San Miguel el Grande and very popular with the insurgents, shows how they identified their cause with that of religion.

“ Quien es tu perfecta guia ?  
 Maria.  
 Quien reina en tu corazon ?  
 Su religion.  
 Quien su causa defiende ?  
 Allende.  
 Pues mira, escucha y atiende  
 Que el valor es lo que importa,  
 Pues por eso te exhorta  
 Maria, religion y Allende.”

<sup>2</sup> One of these proclamations shows the savage character of the insurgent warfare. It sets forth the conditions of the struggle, of which the following will suffice.

4. The European who resists with arms will be put to the sword.

5. When threatened with siege or battle, before commencing we will put to the sword the numerous Europeans in our hands, and will then abide the fortune of war.

6. The American who defends a European with arms will be put to the sword.

Thus was justified in advance the execution of Hidalgo and other chiefs, and the characteristic cruelty of the strife was equally shared.

ber 27 was acquainted with the edict, the thirty days' term should run from October 28. On November 28, accordingly, the fiscal demanded that he should be treated as *rebelde* or contumacious, and that ten days, as usual, should be given to him to appear in person. The three terms of ten days each with two days additional were scrupulously observed. Then further delay followed and it was not until February 7, 1811, that the formal trial began with the presentation of the accusation by the fiscal. This was in the ordinary form, reciting that Hidalgo was a Christian, baptized and confirmed, and as such enjoying the privileges and exemptions accorded to good Catholics, "yet had he left the bosom of the Holy Church for the filthy, impure and abominable faith of the heretical Gnostics, Sergius, Berengar, Cerinthus, Carpocrates, Nestorius, Marcion, Socinus, the Ebionites, Lutherans, Calvinists and other pestilent writers, Deists, Materialists and Atheists, whose works he had read and endeavored to revive and persuade his sect to adopt their errors and heresies, believing wrongly, like them, as to various articles and dogmas of our holy religion, and revolutionizing the whole bishoprics of Valladolid and Guadalajara and great part of the archdiocese of Mexico, being, moreover, the chief cause of the great abominations and sins which have been and still are committed. All this and more which I shall set forth constitute him a formal heretic, apostate from our holy faith, an atheist, materialist and deist, a libertine, seditious, schismatic, Judaizer, Lutheran and Calvinist, guilty of divine and human high treason, a blasphemer, an implacable enemy of Christianity and the state, a wicked seducer, lascivious, a hypocrite, a cunning traitor to king and country, pertinacious, contumacious and rebellious to the Holy Office, of all of which I accuse him in general and in particular." The fiscal then proceeds to recite the evidence taken since 1800, together with a long statement of the culprit's share in the insurrection, winding up by asking that without requiring further proof he shall be condemned to confiscation and relaxation (the euphemistic term for burning) in person, if he can be had, and if not then in effigy, or if the evidence be insufficient, that he be tortured if his person can be had.

The inquisitors received the accusation and gravely ordered a copy to be given to Hidalgo, according to routine; then, in view of his contumacious absence, due notification was made in the halls and proper record was taken of it. After the usual interval of ten days and two days, on February 19, the fiscal accused the contumacy of the absent and fugitive Hidalgo in not answering the accusation and asked that the case be concluded and received to proof.



The inquisitors assented and the proof was presented. Then another interval occurred, until May 20, when the fiscal called for the publication of witnesses, which was duly ordered to be made with the ordinary suppression of their names. Of this publication a large portion consisted of evidence taken during the insurrection, showing acts of sacrilege, contempt for the Inquisition and its edicts and the like, on the part of Hidalgo and his followers. It was ordered that a copy of this be given to him and that he answer it in the next audience, of which announcement was made in the halls and duly recorded. It was not until June 14 that the next step was taken in ordering that a copy of both accusation and publication be given to him and that by the third day he put in his answer with the assent of his advocate—an advocate being appointed for him in the person of the licenciado José María Rosas. Then another witness was found in the priest García de Carrasqueda, a prisoner on trial, to whom allusion has been made above. His evidence was taken, June 21, and on the 27th was submitted to *calificadores* who, on August 12, presented a long and learnedly argumentative report, in which they characterized the several propositions attributed to Hidalgo with the customary selection of objurgatory epithets as *falsa, impia, temeraria, injuriosa, proxima á error, escandalosa, ofensiva de piadosos oídos, blasfema, malsonante, sapiens haeresim, llena de escandalo, erronea, sapiens errorem Lutheranorum, Judaica y formalmente herética, injuriosa al espíritu de la S. M. Iglesia*, and they concluded that if he who uttered them did so with full knowledge of their import, he was a formal heretic.

This was practically the last act of the long-drawn-out comedy, although some additional testimony concerning Hidalgo was taken, February 10 and 20, 1812, in the trial of that habitual liar Fray Manuel Estrada, who had fallen into the clutches of the Holy Office. Events had moved faster than the Inquisition. On March 21, 1811, Hidalgo had been captured at Bajan, whence he was carried two hundred leagues further off to Chihuahua, where he was executed July 31, while the *calificadores* were still busy in formulating his heresies. No notice of this was given to the Inquisition, which was treated with singular discourtesy, savoring of contempt. The explanation of this probably is that if the Holy Office had been apprised of the capture it could rightly have claimed the prisoner as a heretic primarily subject to its supreme and exclusive jurisdiction; there might have been danger in escorting him back through the recently disturbed provinces; the processes of the Inquisition were notoriously slow and after it had tried the culprit and penanced him in an *auto* he would still have to be condemned by a

military court. It was in every way more politic to despatch him in far-off Chihuahua, and the local military and ecclesiastical authorities co-operated to this result, leaving the Inquisition to find out what it could and not even forwarding a supplication which Hidalgo had addressed to it on June 10.

The Holy Office waited patiently for eleven months after the catastrophe and then, on June 25, 1812, it wrote with much solemnity to its two commissioners in Chihuahua, reminding them that the edict of October 10, 1810, rendered it their duty to keep the tribunal advised of the capture of Hidalgo and of all subsequent occurrences. They should have gone to him in prison and exhorted him to make a declaration on all points connected with the edict and whatever else weighed upon his conscience. All signs of repentance should have been observed and reported, and at least his confession to his judges, in so far as the Inquisition was concerned, should have been sent to it. The alcaide, the ecclesiastics and the military officers must now be examined as to his state of mind during his imprisonment, so that the tribunal may know about his repentance or impenitence and be enabled to render justice. The two commissioners are to work in harmony, with power of sub-delegation, and they are made responsible, before God and the King, for the discharge of their duty.

The Holy Office evidently took itself seriously and held that the judgment as to Hidalgo's heresies still lay in its hands. There must have been a flush of indignation and wounded pride when, on January 2, 1813, the inquisitors received an answer from Sanchez Alvarez, one of the commissioners, dated October 27, 1812, reporting that he had applied to Nemesio Salcedo, the commandant-general, who had ordered him to suspend all action and that he, Salcedo, would explain the absolute necessity of this. The tribunal had to wait till February 27th before it received Salcedo's explanation, dated October 22, showing how its supreme jurisdiction in matters of heresy had been overslaughed with as little ceremony as that of a pie-powder court. With profuse expressions of respect Salcedo stated that the peace and prosperity of the provinces required that the matter should not be agitated. Hidalgo was not a heretic and would not have been permitted to receive the sacraments and ecclesiastical burial had he not been duly absolved and reconciled to the Church. A royal order, he said, of May 12, 1810,<sup>1</sup> had conveyed papal inquisitorial faculties to the bishops and the Bishop of Durango had subdelegated the doctrinal canon of his

<sup>1</sup> In weighing the truthfulness of this statement it is to be borne in mind that at this date both Ferdinand VII. and Pius VII. were prisoners of Napoleon.

church, Doctor Francisco Fernandez Valentin, thus constituting him a papal inquisitor. As such, to him were communicated the answers of Hidalgo on his trial, who ratified them in his presence ; he also verified the manifesto of Hidalgo, which was published, and he absolved him. He also saw the supplication of Hidalgo to the Inquisition, which would have been forwarded sooner, but for the risk of its being intercepted. It was now enclosed, together with the other necessary papers. Accompanying this letter were extracts from Hidalgo's examinations, his manifesto to the insurgents and supplication to the Inquisition.

It was somewhat brutal to have kept the tribunal so long in the dark, on a matter concerning its highest privilege, and to have detained, for sixteen months, on a frivolous pretext, a supplication addressed directly to it ; but its position was precarious and it did not dare to complain. In Spain Napoleon had abolished the Inquisition, in so far as he could, in 1808, and in the national Córtes of Cadiz a discussion was then on foot which, on February 12, 1813, reached a similar result. The news of this, however, had not yet reached Mexico when the tribunal on March 13th took action on these papers. It evidently placed no faith in the story of a papal inquisitor suddenly created in the wilds of Chihuahua, for it wholly ignored his action. The fiscal reported to the tribunal that in spite of Hidalgo's supplication for pardon and endeavors to satisfy the charges against him, there were not merits enough to absolve his memory and fame nor, at the same time, to condemn him, as it appeared that he had made a general confession and had been reconciled. Thereupon the tribunal ordered the papers to be filed in the proper place and the case to be suspended—an expression of dissatisfaction and a confession of powerlessness. On March 29th, it acknowledged Salcedo's letter and drily thanked him.

Hidalgo's supplication to the Inquisition, dated from his prison, June 10, 1811, is a long and dignified declaration of submission, calmly and clearly reasoned and manifesting complete command of his theological learning. But for his confinement, he said, he would hasten to throw himself at the feet of the tribunal, not only to seek pardon for his insubordination but to vindicate himself from the charge of heresy and apostasy which was insufferable to him. He answered the various accusations of the edict, denying that he had led an immoral life and exculpating himself with much dexterity from the heresies imputed to him ; but if, he added, the Inquisition deemed his utterances heretical, though he had not hitherto so considered them, he now retracted, abjured and detested them. He concluded by begging to be relieved from the disgrace of heresy

and apostasy ; the tribunal could repose entire faith in his statements for, if he had committed those crimes, the position in which he now found himself would impel him to confess them freely in order to gain the pardon and absolution that would open to him the gates of heaven and would close them if withheld through his denial.<sup>1</sup> It is evident that when writing this appeal he had no knowledge of a papal inquisitor close at hand empowered to remove the excommunication, which could be done only by the authority which had imposed it.

The frame of mind revealed in this document, which is unquestionably genuine, serves to refute the imputation of forgery so generally ascribed to Hidalgo's manifesto of May 18, addressed "A Todo el Mundo" and published in order to quiet the population. Its effusiveness and extravagance of repentance and the earnestness of its exhortation to his followers to submit have not unnaturally created suspicion from their violent contrast to the deep convictions and reckless energy with which he precipitated and sustained the insurrection, but it can be accepted as authentic without questioning his good faith. He was impulsive and enthusiastic and liable to the revulsions incident to his temperament. His cause had been disowned by God ; he had been captured as a fugitive within a few months after he had been at the head of eighty thousand men. The grave was yawning for him as the portal to the hereafter in which there was, in his belief, no escape from eternal torment for one who had died as a rebel to the Church. He was a fervent Catholic whose excommunication cut him off from the sacraments essential to salvation unless he could prove himself worthy of them by earnest repentance and by the amendment which could be manifested only through zeal in undoing that which had brought upon him the anathema. That under such pressure he should seek to avert the endless doom by heart-felt contrition was natural, however strange it may seem to those brought up in a different faith, who can sympathize with his aspirations for liberty but cannot realize the ties which enchained him to his religious convictions.

Although the extinction of the Inquisition by the decree of the *córtés* of Cadiz was operative in Mexico for but little more than a

<sup>1</sup> A V. S. reverentemente suplico reciba esta mi solicitud, haga de ella el uso que sea de su superior beneplacito, concediendome el honor que sera para mi mui apreceable de borrarne la nota de herege y apostata de nuestra santa religion, creyendo sin temor alguno cuanto he espuesto a V. S. pues las circunstancias en que me hallo me harian confesar ingenuamente esas crímenes si los habia cometido, para alcanzar el perdon y absoluciones que debean franquearme las puertas del cielo y que me les cerrarian si por negarlos no se me dieran.

year, when the tribunal resumed its functions in January, 1815, it had naturally been weakened by the suspension. But one inquisitor, Manuel de Flores, had stuck to his post, and he endeavored to demonstrate his political usefulness by an edict of July 8, 1815, condemning and prohibiting various proclamations of the insurgents, including their constitution of November 22, 1814, which was largely modelled on that of Cadiz in 1812.

The capture, November 5, 1815, of the insurgent chief Morelos afforded Flores an opportunity, of which he eagerly availed himself, of bringing his discredited tribunal prominently into public notice. José María Morelos shares with Hidalgo the foremost place in the Mexican Valhalla. Born in 1764 of humble parents, he was an agricultural laborer from the age of fourteen to that of twenty-five, when he returned to his native Valladolid and applied himself to the study of grammar, philosophy and morals. Entering the Church, he took full orders and after serving temporarily the cure of Choromuco he obtained that of Caraguaro, which was under the rectorship of Hidalgo. It must have been a slender benefice, for on his trial he explained his not having the indulgence of the Santa Cruzada by the plea that before the insurrection he was too poor to pay for it, and afterward the insurgents regarded it as merely a device for raising money to carry on the war against them. His morals were those of his class: he admitted having three children, born of different mothers during his priesthood, but he added that his habits, although not edifying, had not been scandalous, and the tribunal seemed to think so, for little attention was paid to this during his trial and in the *calificación* which preceded his sentence it is not even alluded to. He joined Hidalgo, October 28, 1810, and must have quickly distinguished himself, for that chief gave him a commission to raise the Pacific coast provinces and after his death the burden of maintaining the unequal contest fell mainly on Morelos, who was raised successively to the grades of lieutenant-governor and captain-general with the official title of Most Serene Highness.

Unlike Hidalgo, who was hurried off to Chihuahua, Morelos was brought to the city of Mexico for trial and execution, arriving there on November 21. He was carried to the Inquisition, not as its prisoner but "on deposit," and Flores, to preserve the secrecy of the Holy Office, stipulated that the guard accompanying him should not go up stairs or penetrate beyond the first court-yard, and it was not until 1:30 A. M. of the 22nd that he was immured in the secret prisons, in a cell so dark that he could not read the breviary which was given him on his request. The 22nd was occu-

pied with an effort to obtain permission to try him—a *competencia*, or struggle for jurisdiction, carried on in a very different spirit from the masterful audacity which aforesaid in these frequent contests had enabled the Inquisition to triumph over the royal and spiritual courts. The viceroy Calleja desired that Morelos should be degraded from the priesthood within three days by the episcopal jurisdiction in order that his execution should be prompt, and testimony for that purpose was already being taken by the secular and spiritual courts acting in unison. Flores, therefore, had no time to lose in putting forward the claim of his tribunal, and the fiscal drew up an elaborate paper showing that there were points in the case which came within its jurisdiction. On the 23d a *consulta* was assembled consisting of the episcopal Ordinary of Valladolid and the *consultores* of the Inquisition, which represented to the viceroy that, although Morelos was subject to both the secular and spiritual courts, they were persuaded that for other crimes he was justiciable by the Inquisition and that his trial by that tribunal would redound to the honor and glory of God as well as to the service of the King and the state and be efficacious in undeceiving the rebels. Moreover, it promised that the trial should be concluded within four days. Somewhat unwillingly Calleja granted the request and no time was lost in commencing the most expeditious trial in the annals of the Holy Office—a grim comedy to gratify the vanity of the actors, for it could have no influence on the fate of the prisoner save in so far as the Inquisition alone could absolve him from its excommunications under which he inferentially lay. Flores, in boasting of the activity displayed, adds that they were much embarrassed by Morelos being frequently taken from them for examination in the other courts, which proves that the authorities regarded the Inquisition as merely a side-show.

Hurried as were the proceedings all the formalities required by the cumbrous methods of the Holy Office were duly observed. That same day, November 23, the fiscal presented his *clamosa*, basing it on Morelos having signed the constitutional decree of November 22, 1814, as well as various proclamations condemned as heretical by the Inquisition; also on his celebrating mass when under excommunication and his reply to the Bishop of Puebla, when reproached for so doing, that it would be easier to get a dispensation after the war than to survive the guillotine; also an edict of the Bishop of Valladolid, July 22, 1814, declaring him to be an excommunicated heretic. There was still time for a morning audience and the prisoner was brought before the tribunal where he was subjected to the customary examination as to his genealogy and whole

career and the first monition was given adjuring him for the love of God and the Virgin to save his soul by confessing the truth. In the afternoon he had his second audience and second monition. On the morning of the 24th the third monition was given in the third audience, in which he admitted that at Teypan he had captured a package of the edicts against Hidalgo and had used them to make cartridges. The pompous formulas urging him to discharge his conscience in order that the Inquisition might show him its customary mercy must have seemed a ghastly jest to a man who knew that his captors would speedily shoot him, and they contrast somewhat ludicrously with the feverish anxiety of the inquisitor to have a hand in the performance.

That same afternoon the fiscal presented the accusation and, considering the brief time allowed for its preparation, its long accumulation of rhetoric is creditable to the industry of the draughtsman. He describes Morelos as abandoning the Church for the filthy and abominable heresies of Hobbes, Helvetius, Voltaire, Luther and other pestilent writers, rendering him a formal heretic, an apostate from the holy faith, an atheist, materialist, deist, libertine, seditious, guilty of divine and human high treason, an implacable enemy of Christianity and the state, a vile seducer, a hypocrite, a traitor to king and country, cunning, lascivious, pertinacious and rebellious to the Holy Office. He shows how rebellion is heresy and all rebellious acts are directly or indirectly heretical. To Morelos, in the bottom of his heart, Christ and Belial are equal and he is even suspect of toleration. As usual, the accusation concludes by asking for confiscation and relaxation. The remainder of the afternoon and the morning audience of the 25th were occupied with the defendant's answers to the twenty-four articles of the accusation. From what he said it appears that the insurgents claimed to be opposing the French domination in Spain, and that Ferdinand's restoration in 1814 was largely disbelieved or was assumed to be only another phase of Napoleon's supremacy, showing that Ferdinand could not be a sincere Catholic.

That same morning the publication of witnesses was made, consisting wholly of documents, such as the constitution of October 22, 1814, sundry proclamations signed by Morelos and his printed letter to the Bishop of Puebla together with the letter of the Bishop of Valladolid declaring him to be an excommunicated heretic. This was the whole case against him, but it was sufficient. He was ordered to answer with the advice of his counsel and the three advocates of prisoners were named to him, of whom he selected Don José María Gutierrez de Rosas—apparently the same one who had

appeared for Hidalgo. He was sent to his cell to be brought back directly afterwards for an interview with his counsel, who was sworn in as was customary. There was no time to make copies of the papers, so the unusual course was adopted of entrusting the originals to Rosas with instructions to return them and present the defence within three hours. In the afternoon he did so, and in view of the haste required of him he must have been a ready writer, but he was more occupied in defending himself for undertaking the case than in making a plea for his client. He savagely denounced the insurrection and the *córtes* of Cadiz whose principles it represented, and he concluded abruptly with a few lines alleging the repentance of Morelos from which he hoped for absolution. The inquisitor thereupon ordered the fiscal to be notified and the case to be definitely concluded.

The next morning, November 26, Flores assembled his *calificadores* and exhibited to them the proceedings and the condemnations of the insurgent constitution and proclamations. One of the assistants, Fray Domingo Barreda, opined that the accused savored of heresy, but the rest unanimously agreed that he was a formal heretic who denied his guilt and was not only suspect of atheism but an atheist outright. In the afternoon was held the *consulta de fe* to decide his sentence. Without a dissenting voice it agreed that a public *auto de fe* should be held in the audience-chamber the next morning at eight o'clock, in presence of the officials of the Inquisition and of a hundred prominent persons to be designated by Flores; that Morelos should then be declared guilty of malicious and pertinacious imperfect confession, a formal heretic who denied his guilt, a disturber and persecutor of the hierarchy and a profaner of the sacraments; that he was guilty of high treason human and divine, pontifical and royal, and that he be present at the mass in the guise of a penitent, in short cassock without collar or girdle and holding a green candle which, as a heretic and fautor of heretics, he should offer to the priest. As a cruel persecutor of the Holy Office his property should be confiscated to the King. Although deserving of degradation and relaxation for the crimes subject to the Inquisition, yet, as he was ready to abjure, he was, in the unlikely case of the viceroy sparing his life, condemned to perpetual banishment from America and from all royal residences and to imprisonment for life in one of the African presidios, with deprivation of all ecclesiastical benefices and perpetual irregularity. His three children were declared subject to infamy and to the legal disabilities imposed on the descendants of heretics. He was to abjure formally and be absolved from the excommunications reserved to the Holy



Office, he was to make a general confession and through life to recite the seven penitential psalms on Fridays and a part of the rosary on Saturdays. Moreover, a tablet, inscribed with his name and offences, suspended in the cathedral, was to carry to posterity the memory of his misdeeds.

This prostitution of religion in the service of politics was carried out to the end. The next morning, November 27, as Flores reports, the *auto* was duly celebrated in the most imposing scene ever witnessed in the audience-chamber, which was crowded with five hundred of the most important personages of the capital. The mass was followed by the terrible ceremony of degradation from the priesthood, performed by the Bishop of Oaxaca; Morelos was delivered to the royal judge and returned to the secret prisons, whence, at 1:30 A. M. of the following night, he was transferred to the citadel. Flores might proudly claim to have vindicated the jurisdiction of the Holy Office, though at some sacrifice of its dignity, in the shortest trial of a formal heretic to be found in its records, but the object of the indecent haste required by Calleja is not apparent, for Morelos was not executed until December 22.

This trial may be said to mark the close of the active career of the Mexican Inquisition, for although it was not abolished until 1820, and although it continued to molest and persecute aspirants for liberty, there is no trace of its having subsequently celebrated an *auto de fe*.

HENRY CHARLES LEA.